

Angkor Dance Troupe Mission:

The mission of the Angkor Dance Troupe is to preserve and develop the traditions of Cambodian performing arts; to promote an understanding of and appreciation of Cambodian dance, music, and culture; and to provide a positive social, cultural, and recreational opportunity for Cambodian youth in Lowell, MA.

Angkor Dance Troupe Needs:

1. New and reliable source(s) of funding for annual operating costs;
2. Stable administrative component of the organization – staff and board of directors;
3. Artistic growth through expanded partnerships with University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh;
4. Regional development of artistic collaborations and performance schedule, including higher profile in Lowell.

Angkor Dance Troupe Assets:

1. Nineteen years of experience as artistic and educational resource, including performances at the White House, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston's First Night celebration, Yale University, UMass, Brandeis, and the Lowell Folk Festival;
2. Lowell's only nonprofit organization dedicated to the performance and preservation of a traditional form of artistic expression;
3. 100 dancers/students;
4. Highly respected artistic staff members who are master teachers, certified trainers, and otherwise qualified as experts in Cambodian folk and traditional dance.
5. Ongoing partnership with University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh;
6. Knowledgeable board of directors;
7. Strong core audience base in Lowell

As you see from the overview, the Angkor Dance Troupe has been an integral part of the process of resurrecting Cambodian cultural traditions that were severely threatened by war and politics during the 1970's. The Troupe has undertaken this endeavor on many fronts:

- ❖ By engaging young apprentices in rigorous rehearsals;
- ❖ Through documentation and preservation;
- ❖ By promoting an awareness and appreciation of Cambodian culture through performances;
- ❖ Through an ambitious program of cultural exchange with master teachers in Cambodian; and,
- ❖ Through educational residencies in the schools.

A substantial investment of time over the past few years has been made in increasing the Troupe's profile – both regionally and nationally – as a way to bolster fund raising efforts and fortify the Troupe's role as an important cultural asset. This effort has produced

significant results ranging from our emergence as a key player in Lowell's campaign to reduce youth violence to growing recognition for our high artistic standards. Over the years, we have appeared in numerous local, regional, and national media, cultivated several fruitful collaborations, and received a number of awards and citations. The highlight was the receipt of a presidential award at a White House ceremony in October 1999. The Troupe played a central role in Lowell's designation as an All American City. Eleven Troupe members were invited to accompany the Lowell delegation to Philadelphia. A Troupe teen was chosen to speak in the official presentation for the judges. The presentation also included excerpts of two of our dances. Over the past year, the Troupe presented 40 performances and workshops, including extended educational residencies, for a total of more than 20,000 people.

It is clear that the Troupe has developed an increasingly vital and important role in the community. But it is also abundantly clear to our staff and Board of Directors that the Troupe needs to undergo a period of expansion and stabilization in order to sustain its increased level of programming and performing. The Troupe's activities are not self-sustaining. Apprentices do not pay for attending dance classes because the socioeconomic status of most of our families would prevent their participation if they had to pay dues. The majority of fees the Troupe collects for performances go to paying the performers. Without a stable source of operating support, the Troupe often depends on the efforts of volunteers to keep the organization running. At the same time, the administrative workload required to manage the Troupe has expanded in direct proportion to its increased activities.

Currently, the directors and staff of the Angkor Dance Troupe are engaging in an intensive long-range planning exercise designed to chart a course for future stability and growth. The effort involved the investigation of several issues:

- ❖ Fund raising including the development of a viable Year 2006 funding strategy and the identification of source of multi-year funding and long-term stability;
- ❖ Marketing campaign including the increase in fee-based program services, which are comprised of contracts (residencies) as well as performances;
- ❖ Professional artistic development;
- ❖ An expansion of the Troupe's role in serving at-risk youth; and,
- ❖ Institutional and community partnerships.